

IN THE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

THE present spring has been notable for variations in the weather, which some scientists are inclined to attribute to sun spots. That there is nothing unprecedented in recent freakish temperatures, winds and precipitations in this and other sections is shown by the following interesting meteorological observations, tabulated by Mr. Wendell M. Whiting, expert of the hydrographic office of the navy department from the weather bureau and his own records.

THE United States is situated in the temperate zone, where one might expect to find all weather conditions equable, but some of the extremes officially recorded by the weather bureau might cause one to wonder whether or not our country is not near the north pole or the torrid zone.

The highest temperature ever recorded in the United States was at Greenland Ranch, California, on the 10th of July, 1913, when the mercury went up to 134 degrees in the shade. This place, needless to say, was given its name in jest. Temperatures of 110 degrees are frequently registered in parts of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and southern California, during the summer months.

Even far north in Montana and the Dakotas, there is hardly a summer that does not bring a hot wave that sends the thermometer up near the 100 degree mark.

The lowest temperature ever officially recorded in this country was at Saco, Mont., on January 12, 1916, when the thermometer took a slide down the tube to 68 degrees below zero. Temperatures of from 10 to 20 or 30 degrees below zero are quite commonplace in all our northern states during the winter months. Even some of our most southern cities have experienced astonishingly low temperatures, Atlanta, Ga., recorded a minimum of 8 below on February 11, 1899. On the same date a minimum of 12 above was noted at Jacksonville, Fla., famous as a warm spot. New Orleans, situated on the sunny Gulf coast, experienced much suffering when the mark of seven above was reached on this day. This was a winter of remarkable severity throughout the United States.

SOME terrible blizzards have swept over the plains of our western states. A blizzard, lasting from January 11 to 13, 1888, covering North and South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Minnesota, was probably the most severe ever known in the history of that region. This storm descended suddenly from western Canada, following a very mild day, and without any warning whatsoever. Several hundred lives were lost and thousands of cattle perished. The wind blew at the rate of 60 miles an hour during most of the storm, driving before it a thick, fine, cutting, blinding snow, with a temperature tumbling rapidly to 20 degrees below zero. At Helena, Mont., the temperature fell 50 degrees in four and one-half hours. At Crete, Neb., it dropped 18 degrees in the space of 12 minutes. The Arctic regions could hardly produce a storm of much more severity than this one.

The worst eastern blizzard was probably that of February 11, 12 and 13, 1899. The most unusual feature of this storm was that it occurred in a region where mild winters are the rule and severe snow storms seldom take place. The states of Delaware, Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, North Carolina and the District of Columbia, were principally affected. At Washington the extremely low temperature of 15 degrees below zero was registered, and at the end of the storm there were more than two feet of snow on the ground with drifts in exposed places as high as 15 feet.

The southern tip of Florida and southern California are the only sections of the United States where snow has never been known to fall. There have been slight flurries as far south as Punta Rassa, Fla., only 100 miles north of Key West. This remarkable snow fall took place on December 11, 1876. However, snow never lies on the ground south of the 33rd parallel of latitude, which passes through the central part of Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas and southern New Mexico and Arizona.

It might be thought that snow never falls in this country in late spring and summer, but fall it does, as official records bear witness. At Colebrook, N. H., on July 18, 1883, a flurry lasted 15 minutes. At Lynchburg, Va., there was a fall on June 12, 1887. At Fredericksburg, Va., there was a flurry on June 7, 1907. As recently as May 6, 1921, snow fell in Greenville, Ala., a point so far south that snow at any time is a rarity. On July 12, 1888, it snowed quite heavily in the central part of New Hampshire.

Wind storms of tremendous force, yet not of the variety described in lay language as "cyclones" are not an unusual phenomenon in many parts of the country. At Cape Lookout, N. C., on August 17, 1879, the wind reached a velocity of 135 miles per hour, and then the anemometer blew away. At Cape Mendocino, Cal., in January, 1886, a gale of 144 miles an hour recorded and again the anemometer was blown down so that perhaps the extreme velocity may not have been recorded. During many of the West Indian hurricanes that sweep along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts the wind often reaches a force of over 100 miles an hour.

Excessive precipitation in the way of snowfalls and rainfalls have occurred at different places.

Very heavy falls of snow occur quite frequently in some of the far western states. In the Yellowstone park country it has sometimes fallen to a depth of two feet in 12 hours, and at points in and near the mountains 10 to 15 feet of snow will pile up in a month.

At Neah bay, Washington, 140 inches of rain fell from June, 1865, to June, 1866. At Upper Mattole, Cal., 41.6 inches fell in one month, January, 1888. Alexandria, La., reported a fall of 21.4 inches in one day, June 15, 1886. At Washington, D. C., on July 26, 1885, ninety-six hundredths of an inch fell in six minutes. This was during a heavy thunder storm.

These extremes of heat, cold, winds and precipitation make it appear that our climate in America is a most changeable and disagreeable one, and not very temperate; but it is a fact that ours compares most favorably with the climates of other countries in the same zone.

Flag Day Ceremonies.

INSTRUCTIONS were sent last week by the war department to commanders of all corps areas ordering special ceremonies to be held on flag day, June 14. The instructions were as follows:

"Notify all camps, posts and stations within territorial limits of your corps area as follows: In order to foster mutual respect and service between the army and others of the nation, and realization by the country that officers and soldiers come from all parts of its national life making the army a vital part of our democracy, Flag day, June 14, 1921, will be a day of special ceremony to encourage friendly relations between the army and civilians.

"Commanding officers will make offer of as full participation as practicable by their commands in any special programs arranged by communities adjacent to their stations, and when no such programs have been arranged, will try to have a combined civilian and army program carried out on this day."

Would Extend Livestock Credit.

On the eve of his departure for the cattle-producing sections of the west, W. P. G. Harding, governor of the federal reserve board, last week made public a recommendation to congress that legislation be immediately enacted authorizing the war finance corporation to advance \$50,000,000 to relieve an emergency which promises disaster for the livestock industry.

Livestock producers are urgently in need of loans of longer duration than banks of the reserve system are permitted to extend, Governor Harding declared. For rediscounting at federal reserve banks, livestock paper must not run more than six months. This, while facilitating loans for feed purchases, militates against advances for breeding purposes.

Should congress grant the request, the \$50,000,000 would be loaned through reserve institutions acting as fiscal agents of the war finance corporation.

Warehouse License Demand.

There has been a marked increase in demand for cotton warehouse licenses during the past year, the department of agriculture declared last week.

"In the administration of the United States warehouse act," said a statement, "licenses numbering 242 were issued since July 1, 1920, by the bureau of markets, and applications were received for 289. During the previous year 106 applications were received and 24 licenses issued. The increased interest in the licensing of cotton warehouses is thought by department specialists to be due largely to the following facts:

"The Atlanta Federal Reserve bank is actively encouraging warehousemen to become licensed and bonded under the United States warehouse act and a co-operative agreement has been entered into with the Georgia state bureau of markets, whereby the state bureau furnishes a free grading service to all licensed warehousemen who desire it. The governor of the federal reserve bank at Dallas has recently taken an active interest in the act and is circularizing member banks in his district in advocacy of the federal system of warehouses."

Opposes Dam in Yellowstone.

Secretary of the Interior Fall has reported against bills authorizing the construction of a dam in Yellowstone National park below the outlet of Lake Yellowstone, stating that in his opinion it would not be advisable for congress to permit private interests to develop irrigation or power sites within the limits of existing national parks, and that if cases are found where it is necessary in the public interest to have development in national parks, and it can be done without interference with the purpose of their creation, it should only be done on specific authorization by congress, the works to be built and controlled by the federal government.

Power Licenses Asked.

FOUR applications for permits under the federal water power act were filed with the federal power commission during the last two weeks, making a total to date of 222 applications.

The permits requested were for a dam in the Feather river in Montana, to develop 1,700 horsepower; a low conversion dam and wooden stave pipe line to a water wheel capable of developing about 100 horsepower, in the Little Laramie river, Wyoming; a project to utilize a dam already built in the Big Horn river in Wyoming, which conflicts with an application previously filed by the Wyoming Power company, and a permit for comprehensive development of power in the Lewis river, Washington, by the construction of four dams and power houses at Cedar creek, Cresap's Ferry, Swift creek and the mouth of the Muddy river, all in the state of Washington.

The commission at its meeting of May 28 approved amendments to its rules and regulations affecting depreciation reserves, amortization reserves, expropriation of excessive profits and accounts and reports. These amendments had been suggested by a committee of the National Light association for the primary purpose of avoiding conflict between the federal commission and the several state commissions, particularly in matters of accounting and of depreciation. The regulations as amended authorize licenses of the commission to maintain their accounting systems in the manner prescribed by state law, but will require them to file with the federal commission full information concerning the amount invested in the properties covered by license.

Official Coal Conference.

Within a short time the government will be an active competitor of private operators in the sale of coal, Secretary of the Interior Fall last week declared at a hearing on the Frelinghuysen bill for stabilization of the industry through statistical publication.

Among those attending the conference were Secretary of Commerce Hoover, Senators Frelinghuysen and Calder, and representatives of coal operators. The latter expressed disapproval of the Frelinghuysen measure, which would compel operators to furnish the government accurate information on the industry.

Secretary Hoover stated the belief that publication of coal prices is essential both as a protection to the public and the operators.

In support of his prophecy that the government will compete with the present mine interests, Secretary Fall declared that the United States owns more coal than all the operators put together.

The fundamental question which confronts the government of the United States in considering its relations with Mexico is the safeguarding of property rights against confiscation.

So declared a statement issued last week by the department of state in announcing that a treaty of commerce and amity had been proposed to our southern neighbor. Its conclusion would automatically restore complete diplomatic and commercial relations between the two nations.

The director of sales announced last week that an award had been made by the ordnance salvage board to Max Solomon, Pittsburgh, Pa., for approximately 21,000 tons of shell steel and shell steel forgings. The price received was approximately \$217,251. Mr. Solomon was the highest of 15 bidders. Of the 15 bids received, one failed to be accompanied by the required deposit, while two others were not considered because only portions of some of the lots were bid upon.

If agricultural production is to be maintained, every effort must be made to put the industry on a thoroughly sound business basis, Secretary of Agriculture Wallace told a group of publishers and business men in an address last week at New York.

The period of "agricultural exploitation," Mr. Wallace said, was nearly at an end.

"We have come to a time when consumption has practically overtaken production," he declared. "Just now we are in the midst of a serious agricultural depression, caused by unusually large crops and the breaking down of our foreign market and, in part, to our domestic market. This depression illustrates how intimately agriculture is connected with the business of the nation.

"We must learn to take some of the speculative risk out of farming."

Attorney General Daugherty last week named the following committee to frame recommendations to congress for relieving the congestion of liquor cases at present existing in United States courts: Judge John E. Sater, chairman, Columbus, O.; Judge John C. Pollock, Kansas City, Kas.; Judge William I. Grubb, Birmingham, Ala.; William H. Hayward, U. S. district attorney at New York, and Charles F. Clyne, district attorney at Chicago.

The committee will hold a preliminary meeting in Washington next Thursday.